

Statement of  
RICHARD B. HULL  
On S. 2231

SEP 14 1948

My name is Richard B. Hull. I am president of the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, and Director of Radio at the Iowa State College, licensee of Station WOI operating as a Class II station on the 640 kilocycle clear channel in Ames, Iowa.

My appearance in these hearings has been authorized by the NAEB Board of Directors and by Dr. Charles E. Friley, President of the Iowa State College.

My concern as a representative of the NAEB and of WOI is two fold: first, that the principle of a truly free, competitive, and unmonopolized system of radio broadcasting in the United States be better understood and more adequately protected, and secondly, that adequate broadcast facilities be made available to those licensees who are anxious and uniquely able to serve that portion of the radio public not now served, and not likely to be served either by proponents of superpower or by existing educational stations under the presently limiting system of radio rules and regulations.

My duties as Director of Radio at the Iowa State College include those of supervising and managing radio station WOI and directing the development of its FM and television stations. I have been associated with WOI in the several capacities of announcer, news editor, production manager, program director and director over a total period of more than seven years. For three years I served as agricultural extension radio specialist of the University of Minnesota, working with the University of Minnesota station KUOM, and produced farm programs for the University over various commercial stations. During two other periods I did both general and farm broadcasting for WOSU at the Ohio State University and KOAC at Oregon State College. In each instance I was primarily concerned with the problem of serving a predominantly rural audience with program material, not otherwise available, which related not only to the business of farming but the business of living.

I would like the Committee to know that my appearance here is entirely voluntary. No one has urged me to come here to testify. Neither the several stations of the National Association of Educational Broadcasters nor WOI will suffer any economic loss as a result of decisions which may be made as a result of this Committee's action or action of the Federal Communications Commission. Listeners to our stations however will continue to be deprived of a unique service, if the status quo continues, and a super-power grant might well, in certain instances, further limit the already limited facilities of these educational outlets. In other words, with a super-power grant or even a continuance of the status quo, the listening public stands to lose, not the educational licensee.

I think the Committee should also know that the clear channel group, perhaps exercising more optimism than good judgment, through one of its stations suggested that Iowa State College assume a position with respect to S.2231 which in view of the facts and the previous record it was not possible for the college to assume. From information I received from several other quarters, I would judge the pressure was similar to that experienced at Iowa State College.

These requests turned out to be more a matter of interest than concern in this circumstance, but in a sense they typified an ardent wooing of the farm group of which the Committee may be aware and which to the radio industry is an old, old story. This ardent courtship over a period of years, directed at the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange, and scores of colleges and agricultural groups has resulted in many weddings. Too often, I think the record will show the unions were barren and the spouse unfaithful. Obviously the clear channel group's interest in the farmer as a farmer is secondary to their interest in him as a part



of an advertising market. (ADDED INSERT FROM OFFICIAL SENATE RECORD: Senator Reed--"Mr. Caldwell, are you listening?" Mr. Caldwell--"I am reading it very closely.") The real concern is to provide the farmer with adequate rural radio service, a point on which all parties concerned agree. Our objection to the official clear channel group approach is their persistent unwillingness to honestly examine certain sociological and economic facts and their equally persistent assertions to farm groups, the Federal Communications Commission, and others that the I-A clear channel way is the only way. One is reminded of a statement once made by Dwight Morrow: "Men have two reasons for everything -- the one they state and the real reason."

The National Association of Educational Broadcasters is composed of over 90 members which include such well-known institutions as Columbia University, the University of Southern California, the University of Michigan, the University of Oklahoma, and a number of Land Grant Colleges such as the University of Minnesota, Michigan State College, Ohio State University, Oklahoma A. & M., and Iowa State College. The membership comes from 30 States and the Territory of Hawaii, and at the present time operates 23 AM and 32 FM stations. (May I hand the Committee a list of our active and associate members.) Of the 23 AM stations, only 4 operate unlimited time, and the remaining 19 operate day-time only, or on a share time basis according to records of the Federal Communications Commission. The Committee may already be aware through its Senatorial representation in the several States of the unique and special services provided by NAEB Stations. In New York City, for instance, NAEB station WNYC, owned by the City of New York, serves that metropolis with weather service, United Nations information, and other programs nowhere else available. NAEB Station WOI, owned by Iowa State College is shown by independent commercial survey to have a regular listening audience of more than 185,000 families for its farm and home service. NAEB Station KOAC, licensed to Oregon State College, was preferred over all other stations for Oregon rural listening.

I have personal knowledge and experience with respect to several of these stations, having been in their employ at Corvallis, Oregon; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Columbus, Ohio, but naturally my most intimate knowledge stems from WOI in Ames, Iowa where I have been longest, and of which I am now director. If the Committee will not regard it as presumptuous, and since it does typify in many respects the operation of NAEB stations and their capacity to provide special radio service, I should like to acquaint you with what this station is and what it does and what it wants to do. I think the Committee then may better understand our point of view and our concern for serving the listening public.

Station WOI is owned and operated as a part of the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. It receives its funds from general State taxation. The College is responsible to a President who reports to a Board of Education appointed by the Governor of the State. Established in 1921 and in continuous operation since 1922, WOI sells no commercial time, devotes itself entirely to educational and public service programs, good music, and farm and market information for the world's richest agricultural territory. In this area are produced more than 25 per cent of the commercial hogs in the United States, and within the State's borders is 25 per cent of the grade A farm land in the country. (ADDED INSERT FROM OFFICIAL SENATE RECORD: Senator Reed--"You are not bragging about that, are you, Mr. Hull?" Mr. Hull--"It might sound like a Chamber of Commerce commentary, Senator, but those are official records of the Department of Agriculture, both state and national.") WOI has a full and part-time staff of 34 people. WOI uses the 24 hour service of United Press, Associated Press, and the complete leased wire facilities of the marketing section of the United States Department of Agriculture, involving two teletypewriter channels, the Western Union CND service, and the Chicago Board of Trade grain ticker service; it employs an expert market editor and an expert farm editor.



WOI uses the transcription facilities of the World Broadcasting System, Standard Radio, and its own library of 15,000 phonograph records which are primarily of a classic nature. WOI draws on the resources and skills of more than 500 faculty members of the Iowa State College, the Agricultural Experiment Station, the Agricultural Extension Service, and one of the leading technical libraries of the world. Dr. Charles Brown, librarian emeritus, just returned from a special assignment in which he advised General MacArthur, at the General's request, about the restoration of Japanese libraries. All of these services are made available to WOI listeners.

The 1946 Broadcast Measurement Bureau Station audience report gave WOI a regular listening audience of 189,260 families or 662,410 individuals. A survey made by Dr. Forest Whan for I-A clear channel Station WHO in Des Moines reported WOI as the number two station in rural preference in Iowa out of more than 35 stations.

WOI operates on the 640 clear channel frequency, using 5000 watts power from local sunrise to sunset. A special service authorization was granted by the Federal Communications Commission after prolonged litigation and over the protests of KFI, I-A clear channel station in Los Angeles. This special authority permits WOI to go on the air before sunrise at 6:00 a.m. to present farm and market information to the important early morning farm audience. (KFI, incidentally, based its protest on this 6:00 a.m. service to Iowa farmers on the contention that Iowa State College interfered with KFI's early morning transmission in California. I will only remark that 6:00 a.m. Iowa time is 4:00 a.m. California time.) WOI is required by present rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission to cease operation at local (Iowa) sunset, and is not permitted to broadcast full-time night because of alleged interference with KFI, Los Angeles. (ADDED INSERT FROM OFFICIAL SENATE RECORD: Senator Johnson--"Did you hear KFI's testimony, Mr. Hull, before this committee?" Mr. Hull--"I did not have that opportunity." Senator Johnson--How they bled for the farmer, how they lived for him. It was really quite touching." Mr. Hull--"It always has been a matter of interest to us. As a matter of fact, in the Federal Communications hearing one time Mr. Caldwell asked us in what to me seemed to be rhetoric, if Iowa State College, that great agricultural institution, wanted to penalize the California farmer by providing interference between the two stations. At the same time, he had been testifying previously about the highly useful frost warning service which KFI extends to its California farmers, which no one will quarrel with. Yet, the examination of the California map shows that the citrus growing areas in California, which are the primary users of KFI service, are all on the western side of the mountains in an area where interference would in all probability not occur, if it did exist, and even at the most remote and extended definition of interference. I will put it this way. We found that a little unpalatable." Senator Johnson--"If you do not mind, I would like to put into the record at this point a telegram signed by 21 operators of rural area radio stations in southern California, located outside of Los Angeles and San Diego counties, in which they say:

The undersigned owners and operators of 21 rural area radio stations of Southern California located outside of Los Angeles and San Diego counties resent and protest the erroneous and misleading testimony presented to your committee by Floyd D. Young of U. S. Weather Service, Eugene Jarvis, Roy McLain and certain employees of Radio Station KFI. Their testimony shows entire lack of knowledge of the service now available in this agricultural area as rendered by these 21 stations. If the Frost Warning Service should be suspended by KFI these 21 stations would continue to give in their agricultural areas a more superior frost warning and agricultural service than is now given by KFI providing the Weather information is made available by Mr. Young.

We urge passage of the Johnson Bill.



Then the 21 radio stations signed as follows:

Southern California Rural Areas Broadcasters Association; by W.L. Gleeson, KPOR; J. C. Lee, KFXM; Eugene W. Lee, KFXM-FM; Ernest L. Spencer, KOCs; Jerene A. Harnish, KOCs-FM; Ernest L. Spencer, KVOE; Wallace S. Wiggins, KVOE-FM; Gene Williams, KPRO; Riley Gibson, KREO; Dayle I. Osman, KXO; Carl Phillips, KPAS; James Guthrie, KBMT-FM; California Rural Network, Charles Gibson, KPOR; Glenn Dunham, KRCP; Charles Love, KICO; Carl Hyman, KOTO; S. Kim Gerrald, KRNO; Stan Reynolds, KPOR-FM; Bob Wareham, KUCB; Richard Williams, KARO; Woodrow Miller, KCSB; B. C. Boatright, KWTC.

Mr. Hull--"It may be of interest to note, and this is one of the major areas, if not the major area of our concern, that with us, WOI presents more market news to its rural listeners than any station in the United States, according to the Department of Agricultural records; it provides more good music to Iowa listeners -- and I will say parenthetically that farmers appreciate music of a high-calibre as well as other people, -- than any other station in the State, and more farm and market information.) WOI follows a policy of what we call "alternative" listening, that is, provides a contrasting and special program service with respect to the offerings of other radio stations in the same area, believing that listeners deserve a choice in their program tuning, and the opportunity, if they desire, to hear something other than "soap serials." WOI tries to give them a balanced program cross-scheduled against other regional stations.

The listener comments resulting from this policy are numberless. Paragraphs from two letters may prove meaningful:

"We are extremely happy about your new schedule for your market service. There has not been for years, if ever, a radio source which afforded such fine and up-to-the-minute market information. Keep it going. We like it."

Mr. and Mrs. H. Reeves, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

"I'll take WOI at Iowa State College, WSUI at the University (of Iowa), WNAD at the University of Oklahoma or the station from the Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, Missouri. Those stations are doing the job Marconi meant for radio to do -- good music, educational programs, classroom broadcasts, etc. with emphasis on the good music."

Mrs. Emma Lou Heusinveld, Guthrie Center, Iowa

Iowa State College has long felt WOI's inability to broadcast at night was a severe handicap. As any commercial broadcaster will tell you, the largest radio audience is available at night when the entire family is at home. In 1945 an Iowa College Survey showed 65 per cent of Iowa farmers wanted farm programs at night. This was true despite the statement of Victor Sholis, who, speaking for the clear channels, had previously stated the contrary. WOI has made repeated efforts before the Federal Communications Commission to secure nighttime operation privileges and was, of course, party to the recent clear channel hearings before the Federal Communications Commission, along with 8 other college and public service stations performing service daytime only. The roster included KUOM, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota; WCAL, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota; WNAD, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma; WOSU, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio; WHCU, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; Oklahoma A. & M. College, Stillwater, Oklahoma; and WNYC, City of New York. Each of us felt the necessity in this period of world crisis and tension to present more and better information on world and national issues more often and to the largest audiences -- the night audiences -- in our areas, and to offer the public not four network points of view or one or two clear channel points of view, but a choice. With us, what the



commercial broadcasters call "public interest" programming, and too often regard as a painful necessity by them, is our first and major and only interest. Each of these stations are Class II stations on a I-A clear channel. Each of these stations is prevented from furnishing nighttime service by present rules and regulations. Each of these stations is blocked by a I-A clear channel station whose farm program materials come from our institutions.

I have here copies of a letter from the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation addressed to Senator Tobey which in substance states the need and desire on the part of its 126,000 Iowa members for WOI to operate at night to bring programs of culture, information and special market news not otherwise available to its farmer-member listeners. I submit the copy to the Committee.

I have here also copies of a letter from the Western Grain and Feed Association addressed to Senator Tobey. This is the largest state organization of grain and feed dealers in the United States with over 1100 members in Iowa. The letter was written by Mark G. Thornburg, Secretary. Mr. Thornburg was for 14 years Secretary of Agriculture for Iowa. In substance it points out the unique and otherwise unavailable system of grain reporting made available to Iowa listeners through the cooperation of this organization and the Farmer Grain Dealers of Iowa over WOI. The letter describes the general service of WOI, regarded by the writer and his associates as presenting a unique and valuable contribution, and he notes the expressed need and desire of 65 per cent of Iowa farmers for nighttime service from WOI and his hope that this Committee and the Federal Communications Commission will give due attention to these facts in order to grant WOI nighttime operation.

I have here a third letter from the Farmer Grain Dealer's Association of Iowa, a cooperative, which lists a membership of approximately 100,000 in Iowa. Written by Don Edison, Secretary for the organization, it puts the Association on record as wanting the Senate Committee to bring forth a decision which would enable WOI to serve rural Iowa with full day and night operation in order to permit farmers and trades people to get additional seasonal and long-time outlook market information. Present Federal Communications Commission rules prevent and the I-A stations now oppose this extended operation.

Surely the Senators must understand how difficult it is for the Iowa State College to explain to Iowa taxpayers its inability to operate at night with this service by saying Federal regulations require us to protect clear channel I-A station in Los Angeles, over 1500 miles away. Iowa farmers can't hear KFI, and California farmers can't hear WOI. The people in between can't and don't want to hear either station. They have their own. And yet, KFI is protected against alleged WOI interference from the eastern borders of Nebraska to the rolling Pacific. If interference did really exist, engineers tell us it would not be significant except in the Colorado-Wyoming area where farm listeners are not concerned with the citrus growing in California or the corn and hog problems of Iowa. Their problems are cattle and sugar beets, apples and irrigation.

A further fact which contradicts the interference argument is that on several occasions WOI has been on the air at night with special temporary permission to broadcast special events such as the National Farm Institute in Des Moines or an address on atomic energy by Senator Hickenlooper. This has brought no reports whatsoever of listener interference. This further confirms our feeling that KFI, as a member of the clear channel group, might perhaps be more interested in protecting a very valuable facility (and expanding it) to its own financial advantage than it is in scrutinizing what the interests and needs of the public actually are, and what radio service they require, and how that may best be provided them. I submit, gentlemen, that the clear channel stations have never been willing to impartially and comprehensively survey the real needs of various



regions of the country. Rather, fearful that any such exploration might diminish their present preferred position, they have opposed any change, and any thorough exploration, and answered all arguments by stating I-A clear channel service is the only means of serving rural America -- and we may assume in the same breath -- they mean I-A service by the present licensees.

On Saturday last I talked with an official of the American Farm Bureau Federation. That organization gave this Committee its official point of view last week. I was surprised to learn that this individual was unaware that if super-power were given to I-A clear channel WCBs in New York it might emasculate Station WRFD owned by the Farm Bureau in Ohio. This official's apparent understanding was that WRFD was a clear channel station and that super-power would not harm it. WRFD is ON a clear channel but IS NOT A clear channel, and hence neither seeking nor protected against super-power -- which is the real issue. It makes me wonder if the proponents of super-power in contacting these farm organizations have really spelled out the total implications for the AFBF, the National Grange, etc. NAEB is particularly conscious of these implications in view of the fate of one of our members, KOAG, a station in name only, not on the air. KOAG was granted a construction permit by the Federal Communications Commission to serve rural Oklahoma. This permit was then revoked, and the whole issue thrown into the U. S. Court of Appeals because of a I-A clear channel station objection. WHAS, Louisville, Kentucky, argued that if Oklahoma A & M College had such a station on the air, interference would result not only at night BUT DURING THE DAY AS WELL. If such a contention is true with normal present 50,000 watt clear channel ceilings, what would be the result in litigation and conflict with a 750,000 watt super-power grant?

The NAEB has no quarrel with the average and typical commercial station whose standardized programming is aimed at the objective of attracting the largest audience. However, it insists upon the necessity of enriching radio service by adding specialized and unique services, keyed to regions and areas, which are now offered by college and university stations -- on a limited daytime basis only. It seems inconceivable to me that 26 super-power clear channels could even attempt to fulfill such a function. The very nature of the monopolistic position they would automatically acquire together with the standardized programming policy they would be almost certain to follow, would hinder, not help a better American radio.

The NAEB submits that in its opinion college and university stations should be permitted to meet the needs and wants of its own particular radio audiences at night, in the same manner as it now meets them during the day. The grant of super-power to the present I-A clear channel licensees would not only prevent college and university stations from securing nighttime broadcast hours which are so essential in order to reach the largest audience, but would also have the effect of seriously curtailing the service to the present radio listening audience during the day.

The NAEB does not request the promulgation of a rule which would automatically break down all of the clear channels. It believes that the issue on which clear channels should be broken down and under what circumstances, should depend upon the relative merits of each case. It submits that the Commission's Rules should provide for a procedure whereby daytime radio stations licensed to universities, colleges and public service agencies may apply for a license to operate at nighttime on Class I-A channels. Such applications should be designated for hearing and the particular station then operating on the channel should be made a party to the hearing. On the basis of the record established at the hearing, where each of the parties would be permitted to introduce testimony on the need of service to the respective areas, the Commission can grant or deny the application for additional nighttime service on the clear channel. We are not asking for special protective favors. We are not asking for special protective rules. We, the Educational broadcasters, are asking for a comparative consideration of the merits of each of our specific particular cases. This is the democratic method. This is the fair method. This is the method by which public servants, who are the judges of conflicting interests, should make a fair and equitable distribution of radio facilities among applicants.



We are not asking for a redesignation of the class of stations which are presently operated as Class I-A clear channels. Under our proposal their designation will remain the same and, consequently, the protection required to them from stations outside of the United States will remain the same as it is now.

The following statement, approved at the annual convention of the NAEB in Chicago, October 25-27, 1947, will summarize and explain very clearly, I think, our point of view with respect to the Johnson Bill:

The NAEB believes that the distribution of radio facilities differs fundamentally from the distribution of the other media of mass communications, such as newspapers and films, because its primary source for distribution belongs to the public at large. Unlike any other media, it draws its right to do business from licenses issued by a Federal regulatory body on the basis of "public interest, convenience, and necessity." Thus, the licensee has a clear duty to serve not only the general but the particular interests and needs of the area and region in which the station is located.

The NAEB further believes that its member stations are especially equipped to serve, have the duty of serving, and do, in fact, serve specialized local audiences. This special service includes, among other things, a large range of program content -- from special farm and market programs to classroom lectures, educational talks, and discussions on matters of public interest.

The NAEB believes that an integral and essential part of the concept of public interest, convenience, and necessity is the correlation of program content to the local and particular needs of the community surrounding each station. This criterion should be of paramount importance to the Federal Communications Commission in its grant of facilities and promulgation of rules. The NAEB submits that it is physically and practically impossible for any one group of I-A clear channel stations to actually serve the highly specialized and local needs of communities which lie beyond their own immediate area. This is particularly true, insofar as it applies to varied needs of farmers. Just as it is impossible for a Chicago daily newspaper to provide Florida citrus growers with local news, or the Minneapolis daily newspaper to serve adequately the citizens of New York City, it is impossible for Class I-A stations to serve effectively listeners half a continent away.

The programs of clear channel stations which would be subject to interference by the simultaneous operation of an NAEB station nighttime, are not of particular interest to the listeners residing in the areas of interference. Listeners in these areas necessarily rely upon stations located in their immediate vicinity for news, market, weather, other items of information, and general entertainment programs -- network and non-network. A clear channel station located hundreds of miles away cannot serve this function. This is evident from merely inspecting any map of United States crop and livestock areas, which show the diversity of agricultural pursuits in the various states. Granted that clear channel stations do provide some general form of program service to distant areas, it is submitted that the public interest would better be served by permitting an NAEB station to serve its own area with its unique type of service at the cost of depriving some clear channel station of a comparatively small number of listeners in distant areas of a general type of program service, particularly when such listeners have available to them programs from other stations closer to them.



In reaching its conclusions in this matter, the Committee is urged to consider the unique public service rendered by educational and non-profit stations and the principle that the resources of American educational institutions should be available to the citizens which support them. The quality of program service should be the determining factor, rather than the technical and arbitrary yardstick of protecting the coverage of clear channel stations to unreasonable limits. Upon this basis, there would be an improved broadcast service to the rural audiences, with programs designed to meet their special local needs. This proceeding could not achieve a more worthy goal. (ADDED INSERT FROM OFFICIAL SENATE RECORD: Senator Reed--"That is an excellent statement, Mr. Hull. Thank you very much." Mr. Hull--"Thank you, sir." /The letters referred to by Mr. Hull follow:/

Senator Johnson--"I want to make certain that we get in the record at this point another telegram which was received from the Central Coöperate Wholesale, Superior, Wisconsin, by John Miller, Public Relations Director. They asked me to read this into the record. /The telegram follows:/ /telegram not available/

(Senator Reed--"We will recess until 2:30. The committee intends to finish this afternoon. At least, it very earnestly hopes it will finish. There has been sufficient time to develop all phases and angles of this question.

"We will therefore ask the witnesses who appear this afternoon to prepare your written statements to go into the record, and prepare your oral statements.

"We are in recess until 2:30 p.m."

/Whereupon, at 12:36 o'clock, p.m., the committee recessed until 2:30 o'clock p.m. of the same day./)



Scanned from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters Records  
at the Wisconsin Historical Society as part of  
"Unlocking the Airwaves: Revitalizing an Early Public and Educational Radio Collection."



A collaboration among the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Communication Arts,  
and Wisconsin Historical Society.

Supported by a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant from  
the National Endowment for the Humanities



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